



BUTTERMILK FALLS RESTORATION PROJECT

Location: Morris County, New Jersey
Restoration Type: Upland / Wetland
Project Type: Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Significant amounts of wildlife habitat have been lost throughout New Jersey due to development sprawl. In the early 1990s, it looked as if Buttermilk Falls would be lost too. The 212-acre parcel was being prepared for development – a road and detention basin had been built – when the developer declared bankruptcy.

In 1997, Mendham Township purchased the property, in cooperation with the Morris County Open Space Fund and the New Jersey Green Acres program, and declared it a natural area. The township asked the Partners for Fish and



Wood Frog (*Rana sylvatica*)

Wildlife program to help restore the upland area surrounding the access road and to create wetlands on the property. In coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Fish &

Wildlife Service prepared a plan to reforest 19 acres of uplands and create two wetlands near Buttermilk Falls.

Volunteers and township staff planted more than 1,000 trees to reforest the access road. An earthen berm and water-control structure capture water runoff from a nearby hillside for a one-acre freshwater wetland. Plugging an existing detention basin structure created another wetland. Native wetland species are recolonizing both sites.

The tree seedlings are well on their way to restoring the contiguous forest that had been fragmented by the developer's road. The two new wetlands attract water birds and provide habitat for an abundance of amphibians.



Degraded wetland before restoration

Partners

- **Mendham Township [Landowner]**
- New Jersey Green Acres Program
- U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Morris County Soil Conservation District
- Somerset Hills Garden Club



Newly restored wetland at the Buttermilk Falls site



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
New Jersey Field Office
 927 North Main Street, Building D
 Pleasantville, New Jersey 08232
 609/646 9310; 609/646 0352 fax
 Federal Relay Service for the deaf and
 hard-of-hearing 1 800/877 8339
 email at njfieldoffice@fws.gov
 web site at <http://njfieldoffice.fws.gov>
 August 2003